

Bridger-Teton National Forest Fire Prevention Plan 2011



Background

The Bridger-Teton National Forest has increasingly high visitor use due to its proximity to Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks and extensive on-forest recreation opportunities. Many visitors are unaware of wildland fire management and the need to prevent unwanted fires. Development of homes on lands bordering the National Forest has increased the potential for wildland fires in the urban/wildland interface and the wildland/urban interface issue is a significant concern for the Forest and surrounding counties. Planning, coordination, and cooperation on the local level with county and rural departments, Wyoming State Forestry Department, and the Bureau of Land Management along with public education will enhance our ability to manage this situation.

While the majority of wildland fires on the Bridger-Teton are lightning caused, unwanted human-caused fires are a significant part of the Forest fire load. The ten-year average for wildland fires is 70% lightning caused and 30% human-caused. Abandoned campfires are the number one human-caused fire cause on the Bridger-Teton Forest.

Objectives

The primary objective of the Bridger-Teton fire prevention program is to reduce the number of human-caused wildland fires and to increase understanding about the role of fire in resource management by implementing effective and efficient wildland fire prevention programs (FSH 5109.18).

These objectives will be attained in a cost effective manner within Fire Management direction of the Bridger-Teton Forest Plan. The safety of employees as well as the public will guide all actions.

Prevention Program Emphasis

The Bridger-Teton Prevention Program seeks to modify human behavior and change attitudes related to wildland fire held by visitors to the Forest and lands managed by cooperating agencies, as well as homeowners who live in the surrounding wildland-urban interface areas. The program will be adaptable to target historic problem areas, address unique situations, and be designed to serve the communities within our areas of responsibility.

Prevention/Education activities will include presenting the role of fire in ecosystem management through educational programs for both internal and external audiences. The program will teach the concepts and principles of Firewise and Defensible Space to homeowners and community members and educate them on their responsibility in relation to wildland fire risk; plus present fire prevention/education programs in local schools and other venues. Participation in special events such as parades, fairs, festivals and expos will also be used to educate the public. Making public contacts during routine patrols is one of the primary methods to directly interact with the public on the forest.

The ecological role of wildland fire in healthy ecosystems and the management of wildland fire by fire managers will be an integral part of information and education activities. Education and prevention efforts are designed to help the public understand

why there is a need to reintroduce fire in to the ecosystem while recognizing the importance of preventing unwanted wildfires.

Prevention Technicians will develop their own emphasis areas for their respective zones following the Forest objectives. These programs may also be an interagency effort communicating fire prevention messages beneficial to our interagency partners.

Fire Prevention Personnel Responsibilities

The Zone Fire Prevention/Education Specialists are responsible for the development, implementation and administration of the Zone Fire Prevention/Education Program. The goal of this program is to educate the public in fire ecology, fire management and wildfire prevention.

Prevention personnel also serve as Public Information Officers during local incidents by coordinating with fire managers and the Forest Public Affairs Officer involving media releases and information dissemination. They are responsible to post incident information, updates, and other messages to the Teton Fire web site, Inciweb, and the Bridger-Teton web site as appropriate.

Fire Prevention on the Bridger-Teton National Forest is considered a team effort All fire personnel are expected to play a role in educating forest visitors about fire prevention issues such as properly extinguishing all campfires, fire severity, Fire Wise and other fire management activities.

The Forest Assistant Fire Management Officer will provide coordination for the Forest Prevention program.

Human-Caused Fires

Abandoned and unattended campfires are the leading human-caused fire issue on the Forest. Every summer prevention and recreation patrols detect and report the numbers of campfires that have been left burning and cite Forest visitors for this violation (36 Code of Federal Regulations 261.5). In general, the numbers have been trending upwards (see chart below). As a result, educating Forest visitors on how to responsibly enjoy a campfire remains a large focus of the Bridger-Teton National Forest Fire Prevention Program.

Fire Prevention Specialists will track human caused fires throughout the summer to identify trends. Educational programs, media campaigns, and prevention products will be developed specifically to address various causes when appropriate.

Reported Unattended/Abandoned Campfires*							
Year	D1	D2	D3	D4	D6	D7	Total
2010	6	2	7	61	7	21	104
2009	4	3	27	108	9	31	182
2008	0	1	7	40	6	4	58
* Numbers reflect only those fires that were discovered. The high numbers in D4 are the result of location (next to two high visitation National Parks and Jackson Hole being a destination spot), and a higher number of Forest Employees available to patrol the district. D7 is becoming increasingly popular and is also experiencing growth due to local industry.							

2010 Human Causes by District						
District	Campfire	Equipment	Arson	Misc.	Smoking	Total
Kemmerer	1					1
Big Piney	4	1	2	1		8
Greys River					1	1
Jackson	5			2	1	8
Buffalo	2					2
Pinedale	4				1	5
Total	16	1	2	3	3	25

Zone Prevention Plans

Prevention Technicians may prepare a more site specific Zone Fire Prevention Plan for their area. Zone Prevention Plans will target historical and potential fire causes in priority locations during the most effective time periods and will emphasize patrolling certain areas during times of high fire danger or during times of high use. The zone plan will also identify specific public events, such as parades, rodeos and school events where fire prevention activities are planned for the season.

Zone Sign Plans

Prevention Technicians are responsible for preparing a Zone Fire Prevention Sign Plan. The Sign Plan will depict the location and description of each sign on the unit. The Plan will determine a maintenance schedule for signs and describe when signs will be changed. Signing can be one of the most effective prevention actions taken in the field if done in a timely fashion. The plan will include locations of permanent prevention signs, Fire Danger Rating signs, as well as additional locations that will be posted during fire restrictions. An example of a sign plan is located in Appendix B.

Preparedness

The Forest will use the Great Basin Prevention Education Preparedness Levels (Appendix A) as a guide to establish prevention priorities at the designated Regional Preparedness Levels.

Fire Restrictions

The Bridger-Teton National Forest is part of the Wyoming Interagency Cooperative Group; partners include Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service; Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Forest Service, Wyoming Counties and Wyoming State Forestry. The Wyoming Fire Restriction web site is: http://www.wy.blm.gov/wy_fire_restrictions.

The Forest will follow the procedures outlined in the Wyoming Interagency Fire Restriction Plan. The official order will be reviewed by a law enforcement officer to ensure it follows Regional direction and then signed by the Forest Supervisor.

Fire Prevention personnel are a critical resource when fire restrictions are implemented. Duties include:

1. Work with LEO's and District Staff to distribute the official Special Order to field, frontliners, and other key internal and external audiences.
2. Post and remove restriction signs per the sign plan, in a timely manner.
3. Patrol and educate the public about the reasons for the restrictions.
4. Enforce restrictions as appropriate.
5. Work with the Public Affairs Officer to write and distribute news releases, and update the Teton Fire web site, Inciweb, and the Bridger-Teton web site as appropriate.

Severity Requests

The Forest Assistant Fire Management Officer will coordinate with Zone Fire Managers, and the Forest Fire Staff Officer to determine fire prevention needs during times of severe fire danger. Zone Fire Prevention Technicians will work with the Zone Fire Management Officers to develop appropriate severity requests for fire prevention needs.

National Fire Prevention and Education Teams

Forest fire managers should consider the use of National Fire Prevention Education Teams (FPET) during periods of severe burning conditions, unusually high fire occurrence, when the majority of fire resources are committed, during periods of preparedness levels IV/V, or when fire restrictions are implemented. The Bridger-Teton has hosted FPET teams in the past during large incidents with great success and routinely sends prevention personnel from the Forest to participate on teams elsewhere. The exact makeup of FPETs depends upon local needs. A typical team consists of a team leader, public information officer, one or more prevention specialists, and optional trainee or other team members as the Forest deems necessary for the work to be performed.

If the Forest elects to bring a team in to assist with fire prevention efforts, an effort will be made to make it an interagency team working with any other appropriate partners. The Forest Assistant Fire Management Officer will coordinate the team in-brief, provide daily oversight to the work completed by the FPET, and conduct a closeout with the team upon completion of the assignment.

Fire Prevention Partnerships and Cooperatives

The Bridger-Teton prevention staff works closely with Teton Interagency Fire which is comprised of the Forest, Grand Teton National Park, Teton County, Sublette County, Lincoln County, Bureau of Land Management, Wyoming Game and Fish, Wyoming State Forestry Division, and US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Forest is also a member of the East Idaho Interagency Fire Prevention Cooperative. The purpose of these partnerships is to promote fire prevention, education, and safety in the communities in the surrounding areas.

County Hazard Mitigation Plans

In accordance with the National Fire Plan and 10-Year Comprehensive Strategy, all of the counties in Wyoming have completed Community Wildfire Protection Plans which

include a county hazard mitigation plan. These plans are located on the Teton Interagency Website. The Bridger-Teton National Forest assisted in the development of plans for Teton, Sublette, and Lincoln counties which fall within the boundaries of the Forest. Prevention personnel will assist with the implementation of prevention activities as identified in the county plans.

Program Accomplishments and Evaluation

At the end of each fiscal year, the Forest Assistant Fire Management Officer will coordinate completion of the Prevention Year End Report. The report will highlight prevention and education activities that took place throughout the year, as well as present information on numbers and types of human-caused fires. Included in the summary will be statistics on the number of abandoned campfires per District, and any other key fire statistics.

The summary will be included in the Bridger-Teton annual fire report.

Appendix A: Great Basin Prevention/education Preparedness Levels

Prevention Education Preparedness Level Descriptions. Unit Preparedness Levels shall be determined in accordance with agency direction through Agency Directives. The following are recommended Preparedness Levels for the Great Basin Geographic Area.

ALL PREPAREDNESS LEVELS (Before Start of Season)	
<i>Description: The following activities apply regardless of the level of fire activity.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
Support Functions	
A. Training	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
B. Workshop	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
C. Restriction Preplanning (Review)	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
D. Establish Base Stocking Level of Supplies	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
E. Contacts – Establish Network	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
F. Ensure Compliance of Readiness Review	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
G. Establish/Update/Review Local Prev. Plan	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
H. Community Awareness Programs: School Programs, SPA, County Fairs, etc.	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
I. Establish Prevention Staffing	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
PREPAREDNESS LEVEL I	
<i>Description: No large wildland fires in progress. Most units have low to moderate fire severity. Number and size of fires within normal range for that time of year (occasional fire or fires not exceeding 99 acres in size). Little or no commitment of other than local resources.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
A. All Preseason Steps Completed /Considered	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
B. Establish Media Contacts	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
C. Signs	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
D. Inspections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilities: Administrative Sites, Campgrounds, Dispersed Recreation Sites Structures: Uniform Fire Code (App 2A-Def. Space) Defensible Space Projects Industrial 	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
E. Analyze Ignition Causes	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
F. Patrol/Public Awareness	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
PREPAREDNESS LEVEL II	
<i>Description: One or more units experiencing moderate to high fire danger with NFDRS Staffing Classes II and III. Several units having ¼ to 99 acre fires. Potential exists for initial attack fires to escape and become large, project fires. Resources within the area appear adequate to deal with the situation.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
A. Consider Increasing Staffing Levels	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
B. Media Releases Weekly	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
C. Special Prevention Activities	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
D. Target Specific Areas/Causes/Seasons	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
E. Coordinate Patrol Efforts with Enforcement and/or Suppression	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
F. Establish Communication with Cooperators	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL III	
<i>Description: Several units experiencing high to very high fire danger with NFDRS Staffing Class III. Numerous units having ¼ to 99 acre wildland or prescribed fire activities ongoing. Several wildland fires are escaping initial attack and reaching 100 to 300 acres or larger in size. Holding actions taking increasing numbers of resources. A Type 1/II Incident Management Team is on order or committed or 50 percent of area crews or initial attack resources committed, or a 30 percent combination of both.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
A. Establish Regular Press Briefings	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
B. Include Prevention/Education when requesting Fire Severity Funding	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
C. Consider extending Hours	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
D. Increase Communications with Cooperators	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
E. Elevate: Sign Program, Patrols Awareness/Enforcement, Suppression Public Presence	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
F. Evaluate Availability of Prevention Personnel for off district distribution	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL IV	
<i>Description: Two units experiencing very high or extreme fire danger, with NFDRS Staffing Class of IV. Numerous wildland fires escaped initial attack, and several are reaching 100-1000 acres in size. No break in the predicted weather for at least 48 hours. Two or more units experiencing incidents requiring Type I or II teams, 80 percent of all crews or initial attack resources committed on wildland fires. Competition exists for resources between units. Resources being mobilized from outside the Great Basin.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
A. Evaluate Need for Restrictions	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
B. Increase Media Effort – Information Center	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
C. Increase Local Staffing – Use non-traditional partners	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
D. Order Local/National Prevention Team	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
E. Coordinate wildland fire restriction. Also Refer to Prevention Preparedness Levels 1-3.	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist

PREPAREDNESS LEVEL V	
<i>Description: Several units are experiencing major incidents which have the potential to exhaust all resources, while numerous new fires continue to occur. Most, if not all, the resources within the Area are committed; as resources become available, they are immediately reassigned to other incidents. The majority of support is coming from outside the Area. No break in the weather is predicted for at least 48 hours.</i>	
Management Recommendations	Responsibility
Implement Restrictions (After all other prevention measures have been exhausted.)	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist
Prevention Teams - Continued	FMO/Prevention Education Specialist

Appendix B

Zone Prevention Sign Plan and Information example (not the complete plan)

West Zone Fire Prevention Signs Greys River Ranger District



Location: Greys River Ranger District

GPS: N.

W.

Description: Smokey Bear Fire Danger Rating Sign

(low, moderate, high, very high and extreme

Date: Change As Required



Location: Greys River

Rd., Sheep Ck. & Smiths

Fk.

GPS: SF- N. 42° 31' 26.1"

W. 110° 53' 38.9"

GPS: GR- N. 43° 09' 06.7"

W. 110° 59' 48.9"

GPS: Sh- N. 42° 51' 56.7"

W. 110° 42' 5.1"

Description: Message/ Fire
Restriction Board

Date: Change As Required



Location: Kiosk/Greys

River Rd.

GPS: N. 43° 09' 03.9"

W. 110° 59' 47.2"

Description: Fire Danger Rating Sign
Also, Prevention Message/"No
Fireworks"

Dates: FDR Change As Required.